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Equal Opportunity in
Education and Employment.

November 26, 2004

Mr. Kenneth Blodgett
Surface Transportation Board
Case Control Unit
Washington, D.C. 20423

Dear Mr. Blodgett:

I am writing in regard to the *Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement* "Tongue River Railroad STB Finance Docket No. 30186 (Sub—No. 3) and the potential it will bring to southeastern Montana if implemented.

The timely completion of the proposed Tongue River Railroad and the development of the Otter Creek Coal Tracts can create an "economic boom" in southeastern Montana that will be felt across the state and throughout our school system, including Miles Community College. Coal sales and powers generation create many well-paying jobs; provide a significant new tax base; stabilize, if not improve, our eroding population base; and provide opportunities for workforce development through Miles Community College. Thus, the completion of the Tongue River Railroad opens the doors to a new future for many people living in and coming to eastern Montana.

Miles Community College is a two-year public institution committed to providing a quality learning environment with outstanding teaching; seeking partnerships to strengthen programs and services aimed at helping learners succeed at their chosen goals; serving as a facilitator of economic development through workforce training and continuing education; and strengthening our connections to community, professional, and educational entities.

We believe that Miles Community College can play an important role in the development of the Tongue River Railroad and various peripheral developments. We believe we can do this through the potential workforce development/programming for not only the workers and their families, but also for those who participate in the development of the coal and power generation activities and for those who remain and come to eastern Montana to work on and maintain these various projects.

Miles Community College is well-position to offer training programs to you and other development groups. If we can be of further assistance, please contact me at 406.874.6158 or e-mail: hammonD@milesc.edu. Our website is www.milesc.edu.

Sincerely,

Darrel L. Hammon, Ph.D.
President

Start Here... Go Anywhere.